



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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August 7, 2003

In Reply Refer To:

CA-930

6840 (P)

EMS TRANSMISSION: 8/7/03

Information Bulletin No. **CA-2003-053**

To: District Manager, California Desert

From: State Director

Subject: Proposed Rule to Designate Critical Habitat for Peirson's Milk-vetch **DD: 10/01/03**

On August 5, 2003, the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) published a notice (*Federal Register* 68:46143-46160) proposing critical habitat for Peirson's milk-vetch (*Astragalus magdalenae* var. *piersonii*). (See Attachment 1.) The proposed rule solicits information on several topics, including the reasons why any areas should or should not be designated as critical habitat and the potential economic impacts such designation may have on affected interests, particularly small entities. The vast majority (96%) of proposed critical habitat overlays BLM-administered land.

Please review the proposed rule, and associated map, and advise CA-930 (Attn: John Willoughby) if you have comments or suggestions regarding the proposed critical habitat boundaries, or any other aspects of the proposed rule. The deadline for submitting comments to FWS is October 6, 2003. Please provide us with your comments, if any, in electronic format by the close of business October 1, 2003.

Now that critical habitat has been proposed for this species, the conference requirements of Section 7(a)(4) of the Endangered Species Act and its implementing regulations at 50 CFR 402.10 are applicable to any BLM actions likely to cause the destruction or adverse modification of proposed critical habitat. Additionally, the guidance in Manual Section 6840.06B1 calls for BLM to confer with FWS "... on any action that is likely to adversely affect a proposed species or proposed critical habitat." Any outstanding requests for formal consultation with FWS on the Peirson's milk-vetch should be updated to include conference on proposed critical habitat.

Questions regarding the proposed rule may be directed to John Willoughby at 916-978-4638 or to Ed Lorentzen at (916) 978-4646.

Signed by:
James Wesley Abbott
Associate State Director

Authenticated by:
Richard A. Erickson
Records Management

Attachment

1 - Proposed Rule to Designate Critical Habitat for Peirson's Milk-vetch (18 pp.)

Distribution

CA-670 (Attn: Greg Thomsen)
WO-230, MS 204 LS (Attn: Peggy Olwell)